

Summarised inspection findings

Canal View Primary School and Nursery Class

The City of Edinburgh Council

23 May 2023

Key contextual information

Canal View Primary School Nursery Class is situated in a building within the grounds of Canal View Primary School. The setting is registered for a maximum of 64 children at any one time. Children attend from aged three until starting school. The nursery class provides 1140 hours of early learning and childcare (ELC) through full day, term-time placements. The current roll is 62. The nursery is set across two playrooms and children have free-flow access to a secure outside area and woodland. There is also a parents' room which is used regularly for parental engagement sessions.

The headteacher is the designated manager and the depute headteacher has overall strategic responsibility for leading the setting. A Senior Early Years Officer (SEYO) leads and manages the provision on a daily basis supported by an Early Years Officer.

Parents and children speak a range of home languages.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- Senior leaders, children, parents and practitioners recently reviewed the nursery's vision, values and aims. Practitioners demonstrate these through their daily practice. For example, practitioners create a happy and safe learning environment where children are respected, nurtured and included. Children reviewed the vision, values and aims using the wellbeing indicators. This supported the children's developing understanding of the wellbeing indicators and how they can be used in a meaningful context. They identified that they felt included, safe, respected and nurtured in the setting.
- All practitioners are critically reflective and attend professional learning with a focus on improving learning outcomes for children. This includes participation in an Erasmus project with senior leaders and practitioners visiting settings in Europe to share best practice. In addition, practitioners have completed professional learning to encourage language development, support self-reflection and celebrate good practice. They have also undertaken professional learning to support their leadership roles, recently re-named 'curricular ambassadors'. The SEYO carefully monitors the impact of approaches and improvements to ensure curricular ambassadors are supporting continuous improvement. The professional learning is supporting the development of a quality provision.
- There is a very strong collective team approach to improvement. All practitioners collaborate very well to take forward shared initiatives very effectively. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities and confidently lead well-informed improvements. Practitioners have recently re-established learning community Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) cluster meetings. This supports the sharing of ideas and practice to build further the setting's capacity for improvement. Plans to re-establish a collaborative sharing of practice initiative with local

settings should support further outward looking approaches. Practitioners should develop opportunities for children to undertake leadership responsibilities for key aspects of the setting. For example, contributing towards the ongoing development of the environment.

- The depute headteacher and SEYO are highly visible, well respected and valued by the whole nursery team. They create an empowering and solution-focused climate. This leads to a suitable pace of change and shared responsibility for the process of change. Senior leaders and practitioners engage in a broad range of self-evaluation and reflective activities. They make links to local and national guidance documents and have successfully used the How good is or early learning and childcare (HGIOELC) audit tool. Senior leaders support very effectively the wellbeing of staff in the nursery team and gather their views regularly including levels of staff motivation. As planned, senior leaders' establishment of a formalised monitoring process will develop further a shared evidence base of how self-evaluation supports improvement over time.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- The ethos within the nursery is calm, respectful, and inclusive. The staff team have successfully created an enabling learning environment which includes consistently high-quality play experiences, spaces, and opportunities. Indoors and outdoors the learning environment is rich and stimulating, incorporating a selection of interesting, challenging, open-ended, and real-life materials and resources. Children have freedom to explore and make choices. Practitioners successfully interact skilfully to facilitate children's learning and are skilled at providing provocations to extend and enrich learning. These important features are supporting children to develop their skills in creativity, curiosity, and inquiry very well. All children follow their own interests, are motivated, and actively lead their own learning. As a result, all children are secure, engaged and purposeful in their play.
- Practitioners demonstrate a strong and shared understanding of how young children learn and develop. Practitioners regularly evaluate and reflect on the work that they do. This is helping them to improve further their questioning and interactions to ensure they provide increased challenge for a few children. Practitioners use digital technology to enhance learning for all children. In addition, children benefit from accessible games and creative programmes using tablet computers.
- Practitioners carefully observe children's play and are attuned to children's individual needs. They make use of electronic learning journals to document aspects of children's significant learning. Senior leaders and practitioners should now begin to consider how these could be used to enable children to reflect, understand and engage in conversations about their personal learning more readily.
- Practitioners plan for children's learning using the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). They have regular planning meetings which help them to successfully plan for children's learning. When planning, practitioners are responsive to children's interests and use these to plan for intended learning. Senior leaders and practitioners should continue to review the balance of responsive and intentional planning to maximise curriculum experiences across all areas. The intentional planning should ensure children experience greater breadth, balance, progression and challenge. Senior leaders use a one-year overview to record the children's experiences and opportunities during their time at nursery. A longer-term overview could better reflect children's experiences over the one to three years they may spend in the setting. This should evidence their learning across the early level.
- Senior leaders and practitioners need to continue to develop ways to gather data to demonstrate the progress all children are making at nursery. This will help ensure progression and challenge for all children in their learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- The curriculum is based firmly on play. Practitioners are responsive to children's interests and needs. They use developmental milestones overviews and follow local authority ELC guidance for planning. This supports practitioners to identify next steps for all children.
- Practitioners make effective use of the local community, local partners and visitors to enrich learning. Practitioners deliver an initiative that promotes the importance of sleep and bedtime routines with a helpful parental leaflet. This supports parents' understanding of their role in their child's learning. Senior leaders and practitioners should continue to re-establish links within the community. They should promote and link partnership experiences to skills for life and learning. This will support children to know themselves better as learners and the impact of what they learn outside nursery.
- Senior leaders and practitioners have a well-established transition programme. They support transitions into the nursery and onward to the primary school well. Transitions are flexible and tailored to the needs of children and families. Practitioners in nursery consult with teachers in P1 who visit the setting to observe children. This improves continuity in learning for children as they continue their learning through early level. Practitioners complete a transition profile and children enjoy planned visits to the school building throughout their time in the nursery. The current transition policy is under review to take account of changes and developments in transition approaches since the pandemic.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners have established very positive relationships with parents and carers who feel welcome and well supported by the nursery team. Practitioners have taken very positive steps to strengthen parental engagement. Families are encouraged to become involved in the life of the nursery in a variety of ways. This includes, consultations, feedback on events, Stay and Play sessions, Big Family Breakfast events and a programme that supports families and children to learn together. Practitioners provide parents with very helpful information about how young children learn and develop. They also provide helpful links to families requiring support.
- Effective communication keeps parents informed about their child's learning through newsletters, a social media platform and electronic learning journals. This is enabling parents to be more aware of, and develop further, the knowledge and skills children are developing in the setting. Parents appreciate the informal daily chats and more formal opportunities to discuss their children's learning, progress and care.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- The nursery has a warm and welcoming ethos where the wellbeing of children and families is a key priority. There are very strong, caring relationships between practitioners and children. Practitioners value the views and opinions of children. Almost all children are happy and settled in the nursery. All children share and respect resources. Most children show high levels of age-appropriate empathy, self-control and self-regulation. Children feel safe, secure and confident in the setting with practitioners who know and understand them. Practitioners should now encourage children to take part in developmentally appropriate activities that support them to take part in decisions which affect them.
- Children are learning about wellbeing in a supportive environment. Practitioners and children are embedding the wellbeing indicators well in the everyday experiences of nursery. They support sharing, turn taking and children's independence skills very well. Children are increasingly using a visual resource well to communicate how the wellbeing indicators are related to their learning experiences. As planned, senior leaders and practitioners should ensure articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are included within all planning, evaluation and daily dialogue. This will give children and their families a greater awareness of their rights.
- Children are becoming aware of how to keep safe and healthy. Older children support new and younger children well. Practitioners send resources home to support the promotion of a healthy lifestyle at home, including Canal View Care Packs and information about local health care services. As a result, children know how they can keep themselves healthy and are aware of healthy food choices. Most can explain the healthy options on offer at snack time.
- Outdoor learning is a strong feature in the nursery. Most children access outdoor learning every day and experience sustained and lengthy periods of engagement. Most children challenge themselves well to balance, climb and jump using a variety of resources on varied surfaces. Children enjoy the natural environment which is managed very well by all practitioners. They are increasing their sense of wonder and are developing their physical and social skills in a calm, positive and nurturing space.
- Parents speak very positively of their relationships with practitioners. Practitioners provide appropriate and sensitive support for children and their families at an early stage. Senior leaders, the Equity and Excellence Lead (EEL) and practitioners identify children who may be experiencing barriers to learning. They have supportive partnership working with other professionals to help meet children's needs.
- Practitioners promote inclusion and equality well. The nursery has a strong sense of community where everyone is valued and included. Children are developing an awareness of diversity through the identification and celebration of the many languages and cultures of children and

their families who attend the nursery. Parents and carers are beginning to share their cultural experiences and festivals. Practitioners value this diversity and challenge discrimination.

3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Children are making good progress in their early language and communication skills. Practitioners interact very well with children to support their communication skills and language development. Children are developing a love of books through visits to the local library and listening to stories in the story corner. All children take part in a short, focused story session where the majority of children listen intently. These daily sessions would be more beneficial if children came together in smaller groups. Children sustain interest in mark-making and early writing opportunities across the setting. As a result, children's emergent writing skills are developing well.
- In early numeracy and mathematics, most children are making good progress. Children count as they add candles to cakes at the playdough area. As they play and in real-life contexts, children are beginning to use mathematical language appropriately to compare size, weight, length, and shape. A few children enjoy using tapes to measure items at the block play area and across the setting. In both indoors and outdoors, children are beginning to count with confidence as they play. Practitioners have correctly identified numeracy as a priority area within their current improvement plan to develop further their understanding of progress in numeracy.
- Almost all children are making very good progress in health and wellbeing. Children make healthy choices at snack and lunch and are developing independence as they serve themselves. All children are happy, settled and engaged in the nursery environment. Overall, children play very well together. Relationships between children and their peers are consistently respectful and kind. Practitioners are sensitive in their approaches and use praise well to support children's confidence and self-esteem. Children benefit from very good opportunities to develop their gross motor skills using ropes, swings, tyres, and challenging obstacle courses constructed from large loose parts.
- Overall, children continue to make good progress in their learning. Practitioners use electronic learning journals increasingly effectively to document aspects of children's significant learning. Staff track children's progress over time appropriately using developmental milestone trackers. Senior leaders need to collate and analyse this information to more effectively evidence progress over time for all children. Practitioners track and monitor the progress of children who require additional support very well. As identified, senior leaders and practitioners should establish regular progress and achievement meetings to support moderation and practitioners' confidence.

- Practitioners share children's achievements at nursery with parents through electronic learning journals and social media. The setting should now progress with plans to develop approaches to gather information about children's achievements from home and to increase parental contributions.
- Overall, senior leaders and the practitioner team promote equity very well across the setting. The EEL practitioner successfully leads several strategies and interventions. This collaborative, evidence-based approach is helping to achieve positive outcomes for identified children experiencing barriers to learning.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.